

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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O 141056Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY PARIS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2833

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 14331

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FOR THE SECRETARY FROM ASSISTANT SECRETARY
SCHAUFEL; DEPARTMENT PASS ALL AFRICAN DIPLOMATIC POSTS,
LONDON, USUN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR XA
SUBJECT: AFRICAN CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCE: MAIN
RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION:
REFLECTING ON FOUR DAYS OF SUCCESSFUL MEETINGS WITH OUR
AFRICAN CHIEFS OF MISSION, I HAVE DRAWN CERTAIN CONCLU-
SIONS AND IMPRESSIONS FOR WHICH ONLY I BEAR RESPON-
SIBILITY, ALTHOUGH THEY WERE THE SUBJECT OF OUR DIS-
CUSSIONS AT THE CLOSING SESSION. THEY ARE STATED BRIEFLY
IN GENERAL TERMS, AND DO NOT NECESSARILY TAKE INTO AC-
COUNT PARTICULAR SITUATIONS AND CONSIDERATIONS WHICH MAY
EXIST WITH REGARD TO OUR RELATIONS WITH INDIVIDUAL
COUNTRIES OR TO CONDITIONS AT INDIVIDUAL POSTS. I
STRONGLY BELIEVE THEY MERIT SERIOUS CONSIDERATION BY OUR
AFRICAN POLICY MAKERS.

1. OUR AMBASSADORS ARE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE OPENNESS OF
THE NEW ADMINISTRATION AND THE RESULTING INCREASED FLOW
OF INFORMATION. THEY WOULD LIKE EVEN MORE.

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2. THEY WELCOME, ENCOURAGE AND SUPPORT THE ADMINISTRA-
TION'S INCREASED EMPHASIS AND ACTIVISM IN AFRICA.

3. HOWEVER, THEY ARE CONFUSED AND PERPLEXED ABOUT THE
LOCUS OF AFRICAN POLICY DETERMINATION AND IMPLEMENTATION,
AND THE CONFLICTING VIEWS THEY ARE HEARING WHICH COM-

PLICATE THEIR TASK.

4. OUR ABILITY TO DEVELOP A US AFRICAN POLICY ON A CONTINENTAL BASIS IS LIMITED. RATHER IT SHOULD BE SHAPED TO DEAL WITH SPECIFIC COUNTRIES, REGIONS AND ISSUES.

5. ALMOST ALL THOUGHT US SHOULD, IN FIRST INSTANCE, SUPPORT AND STRENGTHEN ITS FRIENDS IN AFRICA. AT THE SAME TIME, WE SHOULD ALSO SEEK TO IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH THE MORE MILITANT OR PROGRESSIVE REGIMES BY TRYING TO INCREASE THE AREA OF SHARED INTERESTS, BUT NOT AT THE EXPENSE OF RELATIONS WITH OUR FRIENDS.

6. THERE WAS STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE EMPHASIS ON HUMAN RIGHTS BUT RESERVATIONS ABOUT HOW AND UNDER WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES OUR CONCERN SHOULD BE EXPRESSED. GENERALLY IT WAS BELIEVED THAT IT SHOULD BE CONFINED, BY AND LARGE, TO GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT COMMUNICATIONS, AVOIDING THE USE OF THE MEDIA IN ALL BUT THE MOST FLAGRANT CASES. WE SHOULD UNDERSTAND THAT THE FRAGILITY OF AFRICAN SOCIETIES IN THEIR PRESENT STAGE OF POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT WILL NOT PERMIT THE ACHIEVEMENT, IN THE NEAR FUTURE, OF CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS AS WE KNOW THEM.

7. THERE IS OVERALL SUPPORT FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THE MILITARY ASSISTANCE PROGRAM AT LEAST UP TO THE POINT OF BEING WILLING TO PROVIDE TRAINING, LIGHT WEAPONS, AND EQUIPMENT FOR MILITARY CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS. A MAJORITY A;SP ALSO THOUGHT WE SHOULD BE WILLING TO PROVIDE MORE CONFIDENTIAL

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THAN JUST LIGHT WEAPONS TO SOME COUNTRIES, BUT WE SHOULD SEEK TO AVOID RAISING THE LEVEL OF SOPHISTICATION OF WEAPONS INTRODUCED INTO AFRICA. OTHERS WERE MORE RESERVED, SUGGESTING THAT RESTRAINTS ON US ARMS TRANSFERS TO AFRICA COULD BE USED TO PUT THE ONUS ON THE USSR AS THE PRIMARY PURVEYOR OF ARMS TO THE CONTINENT.

8. THE AMBASSADORS BELIEVE THAT THE ABILITY OF THE OAU TO SOLVE AFRICAN DISPUTES IS LIMITED AT BEST, AND THAT THE US SHOULD NOT UNDERTAKE ANY SPECIAL EFFORT TO STRENGTHEN IT. RATHER, IN THE CASE OF DISPUTES OF INTEREST TO THE US, WE SHOULD PUT GREATER EMPHASIS ON ENCOURAGING THOSE AFRICAN STATES WHICH CAN BE INFLUEN-

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 14331

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TIAL IN A PARTICULAR SITUATION TO DO SO.

9. REGARDING THE STYLE OF OUR DIPLOMACY, THE US SHOULD:

- INCREASINGLY SOLICIT THE VIEWS OF AFRICAN LEADERS ON CRITICAL AFRICAN AND OTHER ISSUES.
- SEEK TO INFORM AFRICAN LEADERS, IN ADVANCE TO THE EXTENT POSSIBLE, OF US INITIATIVES AND ACTIONS.
- ACKNOWLEDGE SUPPORT OF OUR ACTIONS OR POSITIONS, THROUGH MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT OR THE SECRETARY.
- AT THE EXECUTIVE LEVEL BE MORE ACCESSIBLE TO AFRICAN AMBASSADORS AND FOREIGN MINISTERS.

10. THE PARTICIPANTS EXPRESSED THE VIEW THAT THE FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMUNITY SHOULD ACKNOWLEDGE THAT DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT IN US FOREIGN POLICY AND AS SUCH SERVES US NATIONAL INTERESTS.

11. HOWEVER, THERE WAS WIDESPREAD DISSATISFACTION WITH AID'S PERFORMANCE AND PROCEDURES:

- AID PAPER REQUIREMENTS ARE TOO VOLUMINOUS, TOO RESTRICTIVE AND SERVE TO DELAY AID PROJECTS. EVEN WHEN ALL THE ROUTINE PROCEDURES ARE COMPLETED, THE TIME NEEDED FOR FINAL APPROVAL IS INORDINATE. IT SIMPLY TAKES TOO LONG TO TRANSFER RESOURCES.

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--SOME AMBASSADORS NEED MORE AID PERSONNEL IN THE FIELD, BUT OTHERS BELIEVE THAT TOO MANY PEOPLE MEAN TOO VISIBLE A US PRESENCE WITHOUT A CORRESPONDING INCREASE IN EFFICIENCY.

--UNANIMOUSLY, THE AMBASSADORS DESIRE GREATER FLEXIBILITY TO ENABLE AID TO UNDERTAKE INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECTS.

--NEARLY ALL WISH TO HAVE A GREATER ROLE IN THE AID POLICY AND PROGRAMMING PROCESS FOR THEIR COUNTRIES.

12. THERE IS UNANIMOUS AND STRONG SUPPORT FOR USIS AND ITS PROGRAMS. HOWEVER, THERE SHOULD BE MORE CULTURAL EXCHANGES, MORE USIS MATERIAL, AND A GREATER EFFORT TO PROVIDE MORE MATERIALS IN FRENCH FOR THE FRANCOPHONE COUNTRIES.

13. THERE IS EQUALLY STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE PEACE CORPS, ALTHOUGH THERE WAS SOME DISCUSSION OF THE PERENNIAL QUESTION OF PEACE CORPS AUTONOMY VS THE RESPONSIBILITY AND AUTHORITY OF THE AMBASSADOR.

14. REGARDING FIELD RESPONSIBILITIES IN MULTILATERAL DIPLOMACY:

-- OUR POSTS NEED EARLY AND CONTINUOUS INFORMATION ON A LIMITED NUMBER OF KEY ISSUES OF PARAMOUNT IMPORTANCE TO THE US SO THAT A DIALOGUE WITH THE HOST GOVERNMENT ON THESE ISSUES CAN BE CONTINUOUS.

-- THE AMBASSADORS NEED MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE SUBSTANCE OF DEPARTMENTAL AND USUN CONTACTS WITH AFRICAN AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON AND NEW YORK.

-- ESPECIALLY NEEDED IS MORE INFORMATION ON A REGULAR BASIS CONCERNING ISSUES, SUCH AS ECONOMIC AND

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SOCIAL, WHICH ARE COMPLEX AND ON WHICH PROGRESS TENDS TO TAKE AN EXTENDED PERIOD OF TIME.

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